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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: Priority Theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies

Statement submitted by Pirate Parties International Headquarters, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Pirates are Vanguards of Social Justice

Modern political Pirates are a conglomeration of people who espouse political transparency, freedom of information, and a host of other social justice virtues. Pirate organizations from around the world banded together to form the Pirate Parties International Headquarters in 2010. Our organization espouses a democratic political environment with an open policy of inclusion and equal rights of participation. We operate with fair governance through online mediums that enable mass representation and power-sharing. All meetings and interactions are documented and available online in order to be completely transparent about how decisions were made. Our members propose innovative models for just governance that will involve everyone in society and hinder corruption. We cherish liberty and social equality, whereby all individuals in a society are provided with equal opportunities in all aspects of living. This includes minimum individual wealth to live healthy and comfortably lives by means of modest working conditions. Our views go hand in hand with the sustainable development goals for the UN 2030 agenda to improve human life throughout the planet. Global equality requires the ability of everyone to communicate freely with one another and obtain critical information from society, while protecting their own private information. We encourage the Commission for Social Development to consider the following recommendations to address inequalities of social inclusion through policies that will foster internet freedom and expand participation of a wider array of people in similar multinational online projects.

We Diminish Technology Divide and Cherish Technology Unite

While technology advances in recent decades allow more people access to wireless communication devices, most people still lack access to hardware with free internet access, which includes infrastructure and basic communication devices. Impoverished people also require technology that will serve their basic needs as an everyday tool and as emergency aid. Every person deserves free access to communication and information that does not compromise their privacy and freedom. Communication is a key towards improving economies, healthcare systems, promoting social inclusion, and eradicating poverty. Information technologies transform how economies function. Pirates are working to create direct democracy tools and forums, which will expand the ability of everyone to participate in decision-making and to use internet resources for their benefit. We require further interventions to provide hardware (phones, tablets, and computers) and unmonitored internet connections to those with limited financial resources. Interventions could take the form of subsidized refurbished hardware and grants for training activities to motivate people to participate in online forums which will improve freedom of speech and democracy as a whole. Pirates work to develop websites and software for direct democracy that will enhance the power of ordinary people. We request additional assistance to enable more people to utilize these tools and overcome path dependency. On a global scale, our greatest challenge is motivating traditional communities to take advantage of modern, technological resources.

We Support Online Grassroots Social Justice Campaigns

Since our inception, Pirates have collaborated on a number of whistleblowing campaigns to prevent copyright expansion, invasion of privacy, and threats to democracy. We conduct social media campaigns, routine bi-weekly online meetings, annual General Assemblies, and help organize ongoing conferences: Think Twice conferences and Pirate Security conferences. Those meetings bring together activists who are volunteering on social justice campaigns, assist them to share ideas and boost

their audience. Most of our members are young idealistic people, who feel very strongly about public service, contribute their own funds and volunteer to support the global community. Our philanthropic efforts have limited effects compared to large corporations, special interest groups, and governments who do not agree with our social justice and have extensive resources to disrupt our campaigns. We call on the Commission for Social Development and NGO community to help us collect and allocate funds for online grassroots social justice activities. Technology can liberate people if we provide them with the resources to collaborate effectively. It is incumbent on this global body of non-governmental organizations to support social justice projects organized by ordinary people that benefit the entire world as a community.

We Prioritize Horizontal Decision-Making

Democratic decisions should be based on all members of an organization, not just its leadership. We believe the leader's role is to facilitate processes where everyone is involved and not dictate as an authority. The ways in which we motivate social inclusion has fundamentally changed by technology. Today, technology enables everyone to voice their opinion instantly, compared to the slow communication timelines of decades ago. Pirates utilize digital environments as much as possible to ensure that horizontal-decision making takes place. Online tools allow us to incorporate participants from a vast international community and maximize the impact of decision making through participants from all levels of society, including those lacking financial resources to attend events in person. We believe that the voices of all of our members should be equally considered. We adopt an asynchronistic model for physical meetings, meaning those who participate online are able to participate equally as those who are physically present. We ensure that periods between meetings are coordinated through decision-making software. Some of the programs that we use to promote collaborative decision making are Redmine, Loomio, Lime Survey, Mumble, Discourse, Liquid Feedback, Pirate Pads, and other open source online tools. We should always be asking ourselves how we can enable as many people as possible to contribute and benefit from digital governance. We aim to include marginalized sectors of society by providing them with digital technology solutions that they can use to their advantage.

We Motivate Social Inclusion Policies

There are too many relevant fiscal, wage, and social protection policies that our members support to promote social inclusion than could be summarized in this brief statement, such as online regulation monitoring, universal basic income, and assistance for forced migrants. Our organization does not have a monolithic policy or manifesto, and we respect diverse opinions that are presented amicably and within our statutes of participation. We encourage all of the readers of this statement to collaborate with us towards developing innovative solutions for social justice by participating with us in or online dialogues. Information about participating can be obtained on our website: http://pp-international.net. We pin our hopes on multinational bodies, such as the UN Economic and Social Council, to help us provide social justice solutions and opportunities for more individuals to be involved in Pirate activism. We thank the Commission for Social Development for this opportunity to present some of our ideas about promoting social inclusion, and we hope that our statement will motivate some of you to collaborate with us in the future.